

conflict, but a deadly crusade on both sides. For the patriots it was, moreover, a struggle, not merely for victory but for existence; and when we remember what the alternative of defeat meant for the leader and his adherents, it is sheer imbecility to expect the exact observance of idealist rules of conduct or tactics, which a state of war made it impossible to exemplify even to men with the precepts and principles of the gospel on their lips. There were outrages on the patriot as well as on the Spanish side, though the fearful odium of the systematic brutality of an Alva did not, happily, disfigure the vindication of a great cause. Some of the patriot leaders were maddened by Alva's cruelty into brutal retaliation.

They were not all actuated by the heroic, the self-sacrificing temper of men of the noble stamp of the Leyden burgomaster.

They tortured, hanged, burned prisoners, suspected traitors, monks, priests on occasion. The noble and thrilling picture of endurance and daring in behalf of man's dearest rights has its reverse side, and men like Sonoy and La Marck perpetrated revolting cruelties, and even improved on Alva's savage methods. But it was impossible for William always to control the wild spirit of vengeance which the excesses of Spanish fury evoked, and for such blots on the patriot cause he is not fairly responsible. Nor is it a fair inference to impute to the politician, who united with an extraordinary share of worldly wisdom and diplomatic finesse the profession of an ardent faith in Christ, the blemish of conscious hypocrisy.

To talk the language of the devout Christian in State papers is not necessarily the gauge of religious

sincerity. All the
political plotters of the age, even the worst of
them, Alva not
excepted, speak and write with an edifying
unction when it
suits them. Philip himself constantly appeals to
God, habitu
ally regards himself as the minister of His will,
and Philip
was assuredly no hypocrite. Orange certainly
showed no
trace of the fanatic temperament of Philip, but,
though far
more enlightened and too latitudinarian even for
his fellow
Protestants, he was none the less sincere in his
profession of a
religious and political creed which might be in
some respects
in advance of his age, but which was certainly
not a mere
device to serve a personal end. His most private
missives,
written in circumstances when faith and
principle were tried
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